

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-12. (cancelled)

13. (new) A method for acquiring data from a machine-readable document for assignment to fields of a database, comprising the steps of:

5 extracting individual data substantially automatically from the document and entering the extracted data into the corresponding database fields; and

if data cannot be extracted from the document with a desired degree of reliability from one or more particular database fields, executing the steps of

displaying the document on a display screen,

10 displaying on the display screen the one or more database fields for which the data cannot be extracted with said desired degree of reliability, and

executing a proposal routine with which string sections in a vicinity of a pointer movable by a user on the display
15 screen are selected, marked, and proposed for extraction.

14. (new) A method according to claim 13 wherein the string section is selected, marked, and proposed for extraction in accordance with concept information assigned to the database field.

20 15. (new) A method according to claim 14 wherein the concept information describes a syntax or semantics of the database field, so that the proposal routine selects and marks a string section that is to be marked in a manner corresponding to the syntax or to the semantics of the respective database field.

25 16. (new) A method according to claim 15 wherein the information concerning syntax describes a number of numerals or letters or predetermined formats of the string section that is to be read.

17. (new) A method according to claim 15 wherein the information concerning semantics describes specified terms.

18. (new) A method according to claim 13 wherein a string section is selected that is situated between two limiting characters.

5 19. (new) A method according to claim 18 wherein the limiting characters include empty characters or punctuation marks.

20. (new) A method according to claim 13 wherein text of the document in graphic representation is first converted into coded text using an OCR method, and the proposal routine represents, in addition to the marked
10 string section in graphic representation, coded text of said string section.

21. (new) A method according to claim 13 wherein in addition to the marked string section, said string section is displayed again on the display screen in an enlarged representation.

22. (new) A method according to claim 13 wherein after the marking
15 of the string section, the proposal routine activates a function with which a content of the marked string section is transferred into the database through the actuation of one or more predetermined keys.

23. (new) A method according to claim 13 wherein during the execution of the proposal routine, after movement of the pointer a
20 predetermined time wait interval is observed, during which the pointer must not be moved, before a string section is selected.

24. (new) A method according to claim 13 wherein a table is displayed as said document on the screen, and after data have been read from a first row of the table into corresponding database fields, further table
25 entries of further table rows are automatically determined through a comparison of string sections situated under the first table row with the string sections of the first table row.

25. (new) A method for acquiring data from a machine-readable document for assignment to at least one field of a database, comprising the steps of:

5 extracting individual data from the document and entering the extracted data into at least one corresponding database field; and

if data cannot be extracted from the document with a desired degree of reliability from at least one of the database fields, executing the steps of

displaying the document on a display screen,

10 displaying on the display screen the database field for which the data cannot be extracted with said desired degree of reliability, and

executing a proposal routine with which string sections in a vicinity of a pointer movable by a user on the display screen are selected, marked, and proposed for extraction.